

**Senior Advisory Committee
Tuesday, December 13, 2011
Town Hall, Old Town Road
10:15 a.m.**

Present: Chair Gail Pierce, Dorothy Graham, Mimi Leveille, Linda Spak, Marguerite Donnelly, Betsy Theve, Sandra Kelly and Betsey DeMaggio. Janet Merritt was absent. Deputy Town Clerk Millie McGinnes was present for the recording of minutes.

Gail Pierce called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Approve Minutes of November 15, 2011 Meeting

Ms. Theve moved to approve the minutes of November 15, 2011. Ms. Kelly seconded the motion and it carried.

7 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Kelly, Theve, DeMaggio, Leveille, Donnelly) 0 Nays
2 Absent (Merritt, Graham)

Ms. Graham joined the meeting at 10:18 a.m. after the vote.

Dialogue with Nancy Dodge and Bill McCombe re: Town wide communication/updates to residents, especially during an emergency

Town Manager Nancy Dodge and Emergency Management Co-Director Bill McCombe were present. Ms. Pierce explained that the committee has interest and concern regarding a Town-wide communication system for emergencies. Mr. McCombe explained the process the Emergency Management Directors take with regards to hurricane preparation:

- Begin monitoring the storm and holding meetings seven days in advance of the storm.
- As the storm nears, meetings become more frequent and include other important players (Police Chief, sewer/water services, power company, medical center, realtors).
- Phone conferences with the Rhode Island EMA and the National Weather Bureau take place.
- Visitors and boaters are encouraged to leave and find safe harbor.
- Realtors contact their renters with instructions.
- Individuals who may need special services are identified and contacted. A list is drawn up with help of Nurse Mary Donnelly. These individuals are monitored throughout the storm cycle.
- A storm shelter is planned, but not announced unless imminent danger ensues.
- The police dispatch becomes the information clearinghouse. Information will also be posted on the Town's website and the Block Island Times website.

Ms. Pierce suggested disseminating general storm safety information through a brochure in the electric bills, on the Town's website, in the weekly version of Block Island Times and the Block Island Bulletin Board. Reverse 911 was discussed and dismissed as currently it's too expensive (\$10,000). Ms. Kelly suggested letting community members know what goes on behind the scenes. The Committee members thanked Nancy Dodge and Bill McCombe for attending.

Update on ongoing activities-

Block Island Bulletin Board... ideas for more publicity

Ms. Kelly reported that there were 133 members of the Bulletin Board. Ms. Pierce suggested placing an ad in the Block Island Times promoting the program. Ms. Pierce and Ms. Spak will work on an ad.

Later in the meeting, Ms. Pierce moved to authorize the expenditure of funds to run an ad in the Block Island Times to promote the Block Island Bulletin Board. Ms. Theve seconded the motion and it carried.

7 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Kelly, Theve, DeMaggio, Leveille, Graham) 0 Nays
2 Absent (Merritt, Donnelly)

Ms. Donnelly was not present for the vote.

Swimming pool

This item was not discussed.

FISH – Home visit

This item was not discussed.

Soup Group and Lunch Bunch

Ms. Donnelly reported that the Lunch Bunch numbers are growing. Ms. Graham suggested initiating a meal home delivery service following the lunch programs. Ms. Donnelly noted that delivery was currently being done after Lunch Bunch to about 3 or 4 homes. Ms. Graham, Ms. DeMaggio and Ms. Donnelly will work on further organizing such a program.

The Committee amended the agenda to address setting the meeting schedule for 2012.

Set up meeting schedule for 2012

The Committee consented to hold monthly meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:15 a.m.

Ms. Donnelly left the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Update on ongoing activities (continued from earlier in the meeting)

Tax exemption

Ms. Kelly stated that she would like to see an amendment go forward increasing the eligibility income level for the senior tax exemption. She noted that unfortunately there are no valid statistics to gather regarding the issue.

Senior Moments Pamphlet

Ms. Kelly presented a draft of the amended Senior Moments pamphlet. Ms. Pierce moved to authorize the expenditure of funds to print the pamphlet in color. Ms. Graham seconded the motion and it carried.

6 Ayes (Pierce, Spak, Kelly, Theve, DeMaggio, Graham) 0 Nays 1 Abstain (Leveille)
2 Absent (Merritt, Donnelly)

Follow up on our committee's name and member information in the local telephone directory

Ms. Kelly will contact the publisher to ensure the Committee's information is in the next version of the phone book.

Explore possibility, need, for senior widow's support group

Ms. Leveille noted that she had been approached asking if a widow's support group could be initiated. The Committee members saw this as a better fit for the Mental Health Task Group.

Work on 2012 budget

It was noted that the need for a part-time senior coordinator still exists and a budget for such position should again be requested to be included in the Town's 2012 budget. Ms. Pierce will draft a letter to the Town Council requesting such.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 10:30 a.m.

The Committee decided to schedule the next meeting for Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 10:15 a.m.

It was noted that Sue Black from the Early Learning Center will attend the next meeting.

Ms. Spak stated that Glen Pence, the school chef, would like to coordinate a seniors (high school) with seniors gathering. The members decided to ask the senior class to do Soup Group to begin such a program. Ms. Graham will contact Glen Pence to coordinate.

It was noted that this will be Ms. Leveille's last meeting. Ms. Leveille was thanked for her service to the Committee.

Ms. Theve made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:44 a.m. Ms. Graham seconded with all in favor.

Millie McGinnes
Deputy Town Clerk

Approved: January 17, 2012